



This is an official  
**DHEC Health Advisory**

Distributed via Health Alert Network  
October 3, 2012:1:30pm  
10260-DHA-10-03-12-Mening

**Heightened Awareness: Multi-state Meningitis Investigation  
Associated with Epidural Steroid Injections**

**Background**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) and other state health departments are investigating the occurrence of meningitis cases involving patients treated with epidural steroid injections at outpatient surgical centers and pain management clinics.

On September 21, 2012, the Tennessee Department of Health was notified of a patient with clinically diagnosed meningitis following epidural injection at a Tennessee ambulatory surgical center. All initial cultures of cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) and blood were negative. *Aspergillus fumigatus* was later isolated from the CSF by fungal culture. Subsequent outreach has identified additional patients with a similar clinical picture consisting of:

- One or more spinal injections during July 1 - September 18, 2012
- Subacute presentation of clinical meningitis, usually 7-21 days following spinal procedure
- CSF profile with low glucose, elevated protein and high, neutrophil-predominant, white cell count
- Negative CSF bacterial cultures and gram stain.

Several patients also presented with cerebrovascular accidents, to include basilar strokes.

As of October 2, 2012, seventeen cases have been reported in four states (TN, NC, VA, MD), with four fatalities under investigation to determine a potential common source.

At this time, no cases have been reported in South Carolina.

**Current Activities**

A recall of methylprednisolone acetate (MPA) has been issued from the compounding pharmacy.

SC DHEC has been in communication with the only healthcare facility in South Carolina that received MPA and can confirm that lots under investigation have been sequestered and are no longer being used.

The facility is partnering with SC DHEC to contact patients who received spinal injections since July 1, 2012 to assess their health status and assist in additional referrals as necessary.

**Guidance for South Carolina Clinicians**

Since patients may present for healthcare at facilities within South Carolina, SC DHEC is issuing this Health Advisory to providers to be on heightened awareness for patients who may present with: 1) a history of recent epidural injections (since July 1, 2012) and 2) change in neurological function.

To assist SC DHEC with this investigation, clinicians are asked to contact their local health department, at the numbers listed below, if patients present with:

- Meningitis of unknown etiology following spinal injection on or after July 1, 2012,

- Other neurology infection (epidural abscess, spinal osteomyelitis, etc.) or cerebrovascular accident with symptom onset within one (1) month following epidural injections since July 1, 2012,
- Diagnosed *Aspergillus* meningitis following spinal injection on or after July 1, 2012.

Additional guidance to assist clinicians with tools for use in a differential diagnosis will be provided as they become available.

## DHEC contact information for reportable diseases and reporting requirements

Reporting of suspected cases of meningitis is consistent with South Carolina Law requiring the reporting of diseases and conditions to your state or local public health department. (State Law # 44-29-10 and Regulation # 61-20) as per the DHEC 2012 List of Reportable Conditions available at: <http://www.scdhec.gov/health/disease/reportables.htm>. Federal HIPAA legislation allows disclosure of protected health information, without consent of the individual, to public health authorities to collect and receive such information for the purpose of preventing or controlling disease. (HIPAA 45 CFR §164.512).

### Regional Public Health Offices – 2012

**Mail or call reports to the Epidemiology Office in each Public Health Region.**

#### **Region 1**

##### **Anderson, Oconee**

220 McGee Road  
Anderson, SC 29625  
Phone: (864) 260-4358  
Fax: (864) 260-5623  
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-298-4442

##### **Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Saluda**

1736 S. Main Street  
Greenwood, SC 29646  
Phone: 1-888-218-5475  
Fax: (864) 942-3690  
Nights / Weekends: 1-800-420-1915

#### **Region 2**

##### **Greenville, Pickens**

PO Box 2507  
200 University Ridge  
Greenville, SC 29602-2507  
Phone: (864) 282-4139  
Fax: (864) 282-4373  
Nights / Weekends: (864) 809-3825

##### **Cherokee, Spartanburg, Union**

PO Box 4217  
151 E. Wood Street  
Spartanburg, SC 29305-4217  
Phone: (864) 596-2227, x- 210  
Fax: (864) 596-3443  
Nights / Weekends: (864) 809-3825

#### **Region 3**

##### **Chester, Lancaster, York**

PO Box 817  
1833 Pageland Highway  
Lancaster, SC 29720  
Phone: (803) 286-9948  
Fax: (803) 286-5418  
Nights / Weekends: 1-866-867-3886

#### **Region 3 (continued)**

##### **Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland**

2000 Hampton Street  
Columbia, SC 29204  
Phone: (803) 576-2749  
Fax: (803) 576-2993  
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-554-9915

#### **Region 4**

##### **Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee, Sumter**

PO Box 1628  
105 North Magnolia Street  
Sumter, SC 29150  
Phone: (803) 773-5511  
Fax: (803) 775-9941  
Nights/Weekends: (803) 458-1847

##### **Chesterfield, Darlington, Dillon, Florence, Marlboro, Marion**

145 E. Cheves Street  
Florence, SC 29506  
Phone: (843) 661-4830  
Fax: (843) 661-4859  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 601-7051

#### **Region 5**

##### **Bamberg, Calhoun, Orangeburg**

PO Box 1126  
1550 Carolina Avenue  
Orangeburg, SC 29116  
Phone: (803) 533-7199  
Fax: (803) 533-7134  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 516-5166

##### **Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell**

1680 Richland Avenue, W. Suite 40  
Aiken, SC 29801  
Phone: (803) 642-1618  
Fax: (803) 643-8386  
Nights / Weekends: (803) 645-8167

#### **Region 6**

##### **Georgetown, Horry, Williamsburg**

1931 Industrial Park Road  
Conway, SC 29526-5482  
Phone: (843) 915-8804  
Fax: (843) 365-0085  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 340-4754

#### **Region 7**

##### **Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester**

4050 Bridge View Drive, Suite 600  
N. Charleston, SC 29405  
Phone: (843) 953-0047  
Fax: (843) 953-0051  
Nights / Weekends: (843) 219-8470

#### **Region 8**

##### **Beaufort, Colleton, Hampton, Jasper**

219 S. Lemacks Street  
Walterboro, SC 29488  
Phone: (843) 605-3407  
Fax: (843) 549-6845  
Nights / Weekends: 1-843-441-1091

#### **DHEC Bureau of Disease Control Division of Acute Disease Epidemiology**

1751 Calhoun Street  
Box 101106  
Columbia, SC 29211  
Phone: (803) 898-0861  
Fax: (803) 898-0897  
Nights / Weekends: 1-888-847-0902



[www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)

Categories of Health Alert messages:

#### **Health Alert**

Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

#### **Health Advisory**

Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

#### **Health Update**

Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.